

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 COME-00 SAJ-01 ACDA-19 MC-02

TRSE-00 SS-20 SP-03 PM-07 NSC-07 CIAE-00 INR-11

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 DRC-01 /110 W

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R 031636Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1904

SECDEF WASHDC

SECAIR FORCE WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

CJCS

USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 6696

E.O. GDS

TAGS: MASS, BE

SUBJECT: F-104 REPLACEMENT

REF: BRUSSELS 6697

1. DAVIGNON, DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, TOOK THE INITIATIVE TODAY TO INFORM US THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BELGIAN AND DUTCH GOVERNMENTS HAD MET IN THE HAGUE ON SEPTEMBER 2 TO COORDINATE THEIR POSITIONS BEFORE THE MINISTERS OF DEFENSE OF THE FOUR-NATION CONSORTIUM VISIT THE UNITED STATES AND FRANCE.

2. DAVIGNON SAID THAT AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED ON QUESTIONS OF PRINCIPLE TO BE PUT TO THE U.S. AND FRANCE. DAVIGNON GAVE US COPIES OF THE TWO SETS OF QUESTIONS. (THE TEXTS ARE IN THE IMMEDIATELY CONFIDENTIAL

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FOLLOWING TELEGRAM.) HE SAID THAT THE TWO SETS WERE SIMILAR BUT NOT

IDENTICAL. THEY ARE DIFFERENT BECAUSE THEIR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE AMERICAN AND FRENCH PROGRAMS DIFFERS.

3. DAVIGNON EXPLAINED THE NATURE OF THE QUESTIONS. HE SAID THAT THESE WERE QUESTIONS OF PRINCIPLE. HE ASKED THAT THE ANSWERS BE ADDRESSED TO THE PRINCIPLES. THE BELGIANS AND THE DUTCH REALIZED THAT THE U.S. COULD NOT IN ALL CASES BE SPECIFIC IN QUANTITATIVE TERMS. BUT THEY WERE LOOKING FOR BINDING ANSWERS IN PRINCIPLE. THEY ALREADY KNEW THE DIRECTION OF OUR THINKING AND PLANNING. WHAT THEY WANTED NOW WERE BINDING COMMITMENTS ON THE PRINCIPLES DEALT WITH IN THE QUESTIONS.

4. DAVIGNON SAID THAT THE BELGIANS AND DUTCH EXPECTED TO DISCUSS THESE QUESTIONS IN WASHINGTON. HE ALSO SAID THAT THEY WANTED SUBSEQUENT WRITTEN REPLIES.

5. DAVIGNON EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS. HE STRESSED THAT THE DECISION ON WHAT AIRCRAFT TO BUY WOULD HANG TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT ON THE ANSWERS GIVEN TO THE QUESTIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID THAT IF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S REPLY TO QUESTION 1 INDICATES THAT THE FRENCH AIR FORCE WILL NOT COMMIT ITSELF TO INTRODUCE A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF THE F-1M53 AIRCRAFT IN ITS INVENTORY, IT WOULD BE VIRTUALLY CERTAIN THAT THE BELGIANS AND THE DUTCH WOULD NOT ACQUIRE THE F-1-M53.

6 IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONING, DAVIGNON MADE THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

A. WHAT THEY WANT TO KNOW UNDER THE SECOND PART OF QUESTION 1, IS PRECISELY HOW MANY YF-16 OR YF117 PLANES WILL BE DEPLOYED BY THE U.S. IN EUROPE AND OVER EXACTLY WHAT TIME FRAME.

B. THERE ARE NO QUESTIONS ON CO-PRODUCTION BECAUSE THERE ARE NO PROBLEMS OF PRINCIPLE. BOTH FRANCE AND THE U.S. HAVE AGREED TO CO- PRODUCTION. THERE WERE IMPORTANT POINTS OF DETAIL AND DEGREE TO BE NEGOTIATED BUT THE PRINCIPLE HAS ALREADY BEEN AGREED. HE EXPECTS FURTHER DISCUSSIONS ON CO-PRODUCTION WHEN THE MINISTERS OF DEFENSE VISIT THE U.S. AND FRANCE.

C. THEY NEED THE WRITTEN ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE IN OCTOBER. DAVIGNON EXPECTED THAT THE U.S. WOULD BE ABLE TO GIVE ONLY PRELIMINARY AND PARTIAL ANSWERS WHEN VANDEN BOEYNANTS AND THE OTHER DEFENSE MINISTERS ARE IN WASHINGTON.
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THEY WANT THE ANSWERS AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE BUT THEY ALSO WANT TO GIVE THE U.S. AND FRANCE TIME ENOUGH TO CONSIDER THOROUGHLY THE ANSWERS, WHICH THE BELGIANS CONSIDER TO BE CRUCIAL.

6. WE ASKED WHETHER THE DECISION ON WHICH AIRCRAFT TO BUY HAD BEEN POSTPONED TO NOVEMBER OR LATER. DAVIGNON DID NOT ANSWER DIRECTLY. BUT FROM WHAT HE SAID AND FROM INFO WE ARE PICKING UP FROM OTHER SOURCES, IT APPEARS LIKELY THAT THE

DECISION WILL BE DELAYED AT LEAST UNTIL NOVEMBER.RENNER

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